

Governor Jindal Urges Louisianians to Get A Game Plan for Tropical Storm Karen, Holds Unified Command Group Meeting

BATON ROUGE – Today, Governor Jindal urged Louisianians to get a game plan for Tropical Storm Karen and met with the Unified Command Group at the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to ensure the state is prepared for the storm.

At the meeting, the Governor heard updates from cabinet officials and emergency response personnel on preparation efforts and stressed the need for Louisianians to make a plan for their families as the storm approaches Louisiana’s coast. Earlier today, Governor Jindal issued an emergency declaration, which will help speed state assistance to parishes in need of supplemental response efforts.

Governor Jindal said, “Tropical Storm Karen continues to move north through the Gulf and tropical storm winds will be felt in Plaquemines Parish beginning tomorrow night. A hurricane or tropical storm watch is in effect for 8 Louisiana parishes. We are encouraging everyone to get a game plan now and stay alert by monitoring local weather conditions in their area. Ensure you have an evacuation plan in place, plenty of water, non-perishable food items, hygiene supplies, sufficient clothing, and any prescription medications you or your family may need in the event of the storm. As with every storm, we always hope for the best and prepare for the worst.”

WATCHES AND WARNINGS

Parishes in the hurricane watch area include:

Jefferson
Plaquemines
Orleans
St. Tammany
St. Bernard

Parishes in the tropical storm watch area include:

Jefferson
Plaquemines
Orleans
St. Tammany
St. Bernard
St. John
Livingston
Tangipahoa

PARISH DECLARATIONS

Some parishes have declared a state of emergency, including:

Tangipahoa
Plaquemines

AGENCY UPDATES

LANG:

- More than 7000 Guardsmen are available for mobilization to support this emergency, and the Governor has authorized the mobilization of 650 Guardsmen today.
- TAG Curtis has directed the recall of 520 National Guard technicians from furlough status to support this emergency.
- Emergency commodities, water and MREs, are presently staged in warehouses and will be staged as required for emergency relief operations following the storm.
- Today LANG is mobilizing commodities distribution personnel and Parish liaisons.
- LANG is preparing to mobilize search and rescue assets, communications teams, and security forces as required.

LCpra:

- CPRA is coordinating with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as area levee and conservation districts, to monitor rising water levels to determine appropriate times to close flood and navigation gates on area waterways if necessary.
- CPRA is working with levee districts to quantify flood supply inventories, and is coordinating with levee districts and parish emergency operations centers (EOCs) to monitor water levels on area levee systems and identify potential deficiencies to determine if additional assets are needed for potential flood fighting from elevated tides, storm surges or rainfall.
- CPRA is initiating contingency contracts and moving key equipment into position.
- Notification of all closures, including floodgates, gabions, sandbags, road, navigable and public access closures, will be sent to the public through the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and other emergency officials as needed.

DHH:

- DHH Regions are updating staffing rosters for medical special needs shelters (MSNS) and reviewing position assignments in the Employee Emergency Database (EED).
- DHH Regional staff has been placed on standby.
- Department staff at the EOC are reviewing rosters and planning activation strategies, as well as verifying EOC personnel contact information.

DCFS:

- DCFS team members have been placed on alert status.
- Initial contact made with vendors to ensure available resources are mobilized. Agency has reviewed resources in state as well as verified shelter capabilities – 8,900 State Spaces available.
- The agency has contacted the American Red Cross to gather staffing and shelter availabilities.
- Centralized Intake Unit for Child Protection Investigations (CPI) backup operating
- An email has been sent to all licensed facilities to prepare for a possible storm. A similar email
- Messaging prepared to be sent to Foster Parents, Residential and Child Care Providers.

LDWF:

- The Enforcement Division has alerted every agent state wide to be ready for any possible search and rescue missions.
- Approximately 190 agents with trucks and vessels are on standby. Agents are monitoring the storm and preparing search and rescue equipment.
- The mobile command center is ready to be deployed to any possible flood zones.
- All vehicles and boats will be fully fueled in preparation for any evacuation measures that may be required.
- The agency is securing all loose gear and small equipment items at coastal wildlife management area offices.
- Presently the four 23' vessels at the Grand Isle Lab are evacuated to the South Lafourche Levee District. The 14' and 18' vessels will be ready for use and the 32' and 34' are on stand-by ready to go to Baton Rouge if necessary. All POV's will be off the island and the remaining crew will each have a truck for evacuation.

LSP:

- The Louisiana State Police Emergency Operations Center is staffed and monitoring Tropical Storm Karen.
- Patrol Troops are assessing manpower and resources to ensure appropriate assets are in place.
- PIOs are using traditional media and social media to keep the public informed of developments.

DOTD:

- DOTD Staff is monitoring the weather and is prepared for Emergency Operation Center activation. DOTD Emergency Operations Personnel are on extended duty and on standby.
- Communications checks with all districts and state agency partners have been completed.
- DOTD is working with potentially impacted districts in the path of the storm to gather information and prepare to respond to projected areas of concern for flooding and or Levee issues.
- All District Flooding resources have been assessed and are prepared to mobilize resources to impacted areas if required. This includes road barriers, front-loaders, chainsaws and other necessary equipment to provide safe travel or clear debris.
- DOTD also has all emergency contract flooding resources at the ready if needed.
- Lines of communication with Louisiana National Guard and Department of Education have been opened for possibility of activating "Task Force Bus" should school busses be activated for evacuations.
- For ferries, the agency is taking measures to secure the boats in the New Orleans areas that are not currently in service with additional ties and securing any loose equipment/materials on the boats.
- DOTD will continue to monitor the storm, and if conditions become significant enough DOTD will shut down the ferry service.

DNR/DEQ:

- DEQ and DNR are working with the Fuel Team to make sure proper fuel amounts are available.
- The Office of Conservation is monitoring progression of the event and will issue advisements to exploration and production companies if needed.
- Both agencies have staff on standby.

DOC:

- DOC is taking precautions by topping off fuel tanks and ensuring generators and radio equipment are working properly.
- DOC has made preliminary calls to sheriffs/jail wardens in coastal areas that may potentially be affected in the event that inmate evacuations to state facilities are necessary.
- Correctional and Probation and Parole staff are on standby to respond.
- Rayburn Correctional Center is cancelling offender visitation for Saturday and Sunday, October 5-6, 2013.

LDAF:

- The Agriculture Commissioner is urging livestock and pet owners to make arrangements ahead of time to move their animals in the event of flooding.
- The agency is recommending that cattle and horse owners identify an area on their property that is least likely to flood so that livestock can quickly and easily be moved.
- Advising that livestock trailers be checked for tire pressure, tire wear, brakes, running lights and overall condition; and if animals are moved – health records, food, medications and proper identification for livestock that are evacuated is crucial during a natural disaster.
- Livestock owners who need assistance should call their local Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) for a list of veterinarians and trained professionals who can assist.

LED:

- LED stands ready to activate the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center, or LA BEOC, in partnership with NIMSAT (National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies at ULL), the LSU Stephenson Disaster Management Institute and GOHSEP.
- LA BEOC facilitates two-way communication between businesses – including the state's major economic drivers – and critical infrastructure resources – including state and local governments – during emergency management responses to crises.
- Resources are available online via www.labeoc.org during virtual activation and through the LA BEOC's LSU South Campus location during physical activation: (225) 334-BEOC (2362).
- LED also stands ready to implement an assessment of damages and economic loss sustained in the state due to a tropical weather disaster. Our team of economists will coordinate this effort to facilitate the state, local and federal response in the event of a disaster striking the state.

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